Lords of Madness

By Keith Baker

This first installment of Keith Baker's new *Eberron Expanded* column focuses on adapting material from *Lords of Madness:* the Book of Aberrations, for use in an **Eberron** campaign.

Overview: The Role of Aberrations in Eberron

In Eberron, all aberrations share a common bond. Thousands of years ago, beings known as the daelkyr led an extraplanar incursion into Eberron. True lords of madness, these shapers of flesh brought with them a host of horrors from the plane of Xoriat. As the daelkyr sank their talons into Eberron, they twisted and corrupted any other creatures unfortunate enough to fall into their clutches. Eventually, the shapers of flesh were defeated and sealed in the underworld of Khyber, where they continue to create new terrors even now.

But the daelkyr were not responsible for all of Eberron's aberrations. According to myth, the world was formed from three dragons. Eberron, the Dragon Between, is the source of all natural creatures, and Khyber, the Dragon Below, spawns fiends and aberrations. So while the daelkyr create monsters in the darkness of the underworld, Khyber continues to generate horrors of its own.

Although many aberrations -- including beholders, mind flayers, and grell -- are natives of Xoriat brought to Eberron by the daelkyr, their creature type remains aberration, not outsider. Just as elementals and lycanthropes can be found on Lamannia and fey exist in Thelanis, aberrations have a place in Xoriat.

Except for matters relating to history, the material in *Lords of Madness* dovetails quite nicely with that in the **Eberron** books. For example, aboleth tactics, glyphs, and feats can be taken directly from the book, but a DM wishing to use these creatures must decide how they fit into the history of Eberron, Khyber, and Xoriat. The following sections look at each of the chapters in *Lords of Madness* and suggest ways to adapt the featured aberrations for use in an **Eberron** campaign.

Aboleths

According to *Lords of Madness,* the civilization of the aboleths is the most ancient in existence. The memories of these creatures stretch back to a time before time, and they can recall ancient evils that have long since faded from human knowledge. Only a few simple changes are needed to adapt this concept for use in an **Eberron** campaign.

The mythology of Eberron mentions a war that took place at the dawn of time. Most legends speak of the rakshasas as the first fiends and refer to them as the most ancient enemies of the light. But these creatures were not the only children of Khyber -- the oceans became home to the aboleths at about the same time as the first rakshasas were created. The rakshasas ruled the land, but the aboleths held sway in the deep waters, unknown to all but a few. Both battled dragons and couatls, and in time, both saw the Elder Evils cast down and bound by the Silver Flame. After this defeat, the aboleths retreated to the depths where no dragon could follow them. In the hundreds of millennia since, they have slowly returned, spreading their influence across the world. Now the aboleths wait for the day when the Silver Flame will gutter and die, allowing the Elder Evils to return and claim the world as their own.

If you accept this version of Eberron's history, the aboleths become contemporaries of the Lords of Dust and enemies of the Chamber and the Church of the Silver Flame. The Elder Evils -- those ancient powers bound by the Silver Flame -- are also known as the rakshasa rajahs, though this latter name is simply a title. Eberron's history portrays these overlords as unique spirits with powers far beyond those of any rakshasa, and the Elder Evils detailed in *Lords of Madness* certainly fill the bill. Thus, they can also serve as the powers behind the Lords of Dust and the Carrion Tribes of the Demon Wastes.

Like the dragons and the rakshasas, the aboleths have the perspective required to study and understand the Draconic Prophecy fully, and they have discovered segments of it hidden in the deep waters. Like the rakshasas, the aboleths seek vengeance against the dragons and intend to twist the path of the Draconic Prophecy. As a result, characters working for the Chamber can easily be drawn into conflict with aboleths and their agents.

Beholders

Beholders served as living artillery during the daelkyr incursion, using the terrible power of their eyes to shatter whole goblin armies. In **Eberron,** beholders do not reproduce naturally and have not created a culture of their own -- they are simply the immortal servants of the daelkyr. Most continue to serve their masters, commanding subterranean outposts of aberrations or serving as the hidden leaders of various Cults of the Dragon Below. Others lead solitary lives, contemplating mysteries or studying the world. Such lone beholders may manipulate humanoid communities, but their actions are rarely driven by a desire for personal power.

Aside from the material dealing with beholder culture and reproduction, all the information presented in *Lords of Madness* applies to the beholders of Eberron. Members of the Cults of the Dragon Below believe that these creatures function as the eyes of a greater power. Some insist that they serve Belashyrra, a powerful daelkyr who is also known as the Lord of Eyes. Others claim the beholders are the eyes of Xoriat itself -- that while they serve the daelkyr, they are conduits to a power even greater and more terrible than the shapers of flesh.

Mind Flayers

The mind flayers are the chief servants of the daelkyr. The elder brains may be daelkyr creations, or they may actually be spiritual and physical extensions of the daelkyr. In either case, the elder brains form the backbone of the telepathic network that links the daelkyr together and allows them to monitor their servants.

Eberron is not the first world that the daelkyr have attacked. It is possible that the mind flayers were created when the daelkyr destroyed the native world of the gith races. If so, the githzerai and githyanki are descendants of those few survivors who fled to Kythri and the Astral Plane, while the mind flayers are descended from survivors of the progenitor race who were twisted in the same manner as the dolgaunts and dolgrims.

Neogi

Once, a mighty dwarven empire lay beneath the Ironroot Mountains. The founders of the modern Mror clans were exiles from this kingdom. When their descendants finally returned to the depths, they discovered that their ancestral homeland had been annihilated by the daelkyr long ago. But some traces of that ruined kingdom remain -- and among those remnants are the neogi.

Just as the dolgaunts were created from hobgoblins, the neogi were created from dwarves. Though the neogi bear no physical resemblance to their predecessor race, the greed that burns at the heart of the dwarven psyche remains, driving the neogi to consume and control.

Until recently, the neogi were only a legend. Perhaps they had slumbered for a time and were finally awakened when dwarf explorers ventured too far into the depths of the Ironroot Mountains. Now, however, the neogi can appear anywhere in northwestern Khorvaire. Their tunnels stretch far from the Ironroots, and neogi raiders have been encountered in the Lhazaar Principalities, Karrnath, and the Talenta Plains.

Although the neogi are surely daelkyr creations, they have no direct tie to the lords of Xoriat in the present day. Thus, the neogi culture from *Lords of Madness* is usable as is, except that neogi ships do not travel between worlds. It is quite possible, however, that the daelkyr possess an as-yet-unrevealed ability to control the neogi. If so, the slavers may someday be quite surprised to realize that they are slaves themselves.

Grell

Grell are vicious predators driven by their disturbing appetites. Unlike many of Eberron's other aberrations, these natives of Xoriat were not introduced by the daelkyr. Rather, they drifted into the world through the soft spaces that existed between the planes in the time before the Gatekeepers raised their seals.

All of the material on grell in *Lords of Madness* can be used as is except one item: The grell of Eberron possesses damage reduction 5/byeshk.

Tsochar

The daelkyr are infamous for their use of symbionts and grafts, so it comes as no surprise that the shapers of flesh were also responsible for the tsochar -- parasitical creatures that can enslave or destroy the beings they inhabit. The tsochar are living weapons that the daelkyr release whenever they invade a world. Once freed, the creatures spread out to infiltrate the native species and steal the arcane knowledge of any creatures that might threaten the forces of Xoriat.

The tsochar are deeply religious, but in Eberron, they give their devotion to the daelkyr and the powers of Xoriat rather than to Mak Thuum Ngatha. Tsochar are often associated with the Cults of the Dragon Below, and bonding with a tsochar is among the greatest honors to which a priest of such a cult can aspire -- even if it means his eventual death. A tsochar can be an excellent vector for introducing a cult into a new region -- the fiery street preacher who suddenly appears on the streets of Fairhaven could be a tsochar plant.

Though they remain loyal servants of the lords of Xoriat, the tsochar consider themselves superior to all other daelkyr creations. Unless they are in a clear position of power, they prefer to avoid other aberrations altogether, In particular, a strong rivalry exists between the tsochar and the mind flayers because the former creatures envy the favored position of the illithids.

The Aberration Hunter

Chapter Nine of *Lords of Madness* provides options for creating player characters with a focus on aberrations -- both characters who hunt such creatures and those who have been tainted by their presence. A detailed discussion of all these options would constitute an article in its own right, but this new material is most relevant to three particular aspects of the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting.*

Ancient Defenders

Prior to the Xoriat incursion, the dragon Vvaraak came to Khorvaire and taught a group of orcs certain rituals to defend the natural world from alien influences. Thus were born the Gatekeepers (described on page 241 of the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting*). The Gatekeepers are the ones who eventually defeated the daelkyr and bound them in Khyber. Today, the few remaining Gatekeepers guard the ancient seals and hunt the twisted servants of Xoriat.

The abolisher prestige class is a perfect match for the Gatekeeper order, and all of the general feats presented in *Lords of Madness* are highly appropriate for Gatekeeper rangers or druids. The keeper of the Cerulean Sign and the topaz guardian both share the goals of the Gatekeepers, but they use different techniques. Characters with these classes are more likely to be found among the people of the Seren Islands, who have also been taught by dragons. A dragon of the Chamber who expects to be dealing with aboleths may be able to call on keepers of the Cerulean Sign to aid her in battle.

The darkrunner prestige class is suitable for Gatekeepers, but it is also appropriate for the dwarves of the Mror Holds. Many dwarves are interested in unearthing the history of the fallen kingdom, and some of the greatest heroes of the Mror clans are those who have fought aberrations in the depths below the Ironroot Mountains.

The sanctified mind prestige class is most appropriate for a kalashtar character. Though it is well-suited to fighting the psionic powers of aberrations, it also represents an excellent match for the kalashtars' ongoing struggle with the Dreaming Dark.

The Cults of the Dragon Below

The Cults of the Dragon Below are the primary source of aberrant corruption in Eberron. The fleshwarper prestige class and the aberrant feats presented in *Lords of Madness* are all appropriate for cultists, as are the Hatred and Corruption domains. The fact that the cults are not unified in belief or structure can be reflected by making different domain choices available to members. Instead of allowing free access to all domains, the DM should choose three of the following for each cult: Corruption, Dragon Below, Earth, Evil, Hatred, or Madness.

Aberrant Blood

The aberrant dragonmark described in the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* can serve as an interesting tie to *Lords of Madness.* Such a mark typically appears when members of two different dragonmarked bloodlines have children. Although aberrant dragonmarks seem relatively harmless, providing weak powers that cannot be increased, a great deal of superstition surrounds them. In fact, stories say that they actually twist the bearer's body and mind.

But what if these tales were true? If you use this variant, the Aberrant Dragonmark feat becomes an aberrant feat and can be substituted for Aberrant Blood to meet the prerequisites of any other aberrant feat. An aberrant dragonmark may not seem so bad, but when your character develops inhuman reach or inhuman vision, his companions may well start to worry.

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., he has produced material for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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Heroes of Battle, Part One

By Keith Baker

This installment of Keith Baker's new *Eberron Expanded* column focuses on adapting material from *Heroes of Battle* for use in an **Eberron** campaign.

Overview: Armed Conflict in Eberron

A Valenar warband crests the hill. A shiver runs through your comrades-at-arms when they recognize the banner of Caelys Drynn, the cavalry commander who led the charge at the Redoak Bridge. The sound of singing drifts down the slope as the enemy troops, who obviously adore their leader, begin to sing the praises of Drynn and his ancestors. Then a flight of arrows fills the air, and the elves begin the charge.

As the rain of missiles fills the sky, you feel the touch of magic, and the shafts scatter and split. Your commander, Jila ir'Catar, calls on the war wizards to hold their ground. Jila has never lost a battle, and her reputation gives you confidence. Now the first wave of cavalry draws near, and you prepare to shield the nearest wizard with your body if need be. Right now, his magic is worth far more than your steel.

Heroes of Battle introduces a variety of optional rules systems that can help you bring war stories such as the one above to a fantasy world. Using these guidelines, a commander can hone his talents to perfect a certain style of combat, and small military units -- such as parties of adventurers -- can learn special techniques that provide invaluable benefits in battle. In addition, the book contains rules for siege engines, morale, aerial bombardment, and more. All in all, the various systems described in *Heroes of Battle* help to differentiate the forces of various nations and add color to combat.

The narration above describes the moment when the great cavalry commander Caelys Drynn (N male elf fighter 6/legendary leader 4) joins battle with the troops of Jila ir'Catar of Aundair (LN female human wizard 5/war weaver 5). Drynn's deeds are an inspiration to his troops, and his image is further bolstered by his elf commander aura (*Heroes of Battle,* page 76) and his levels in the legendary leader prestige class (*Heroes of Battle,* page 108). Drynn also has the Mounted Mobility feat (*Heroes of Battle,* page 98) and has trained his personal warband in the heavy cavalry teamwork technique (*Heroes of Battle,* page 117). These advantages have allowed him to overrun many foes.

But the Valenar commander may have met his match in Jila ir'Catar. Her war weaving ability lets her spread her spells across multiple units, her spellslinging commander aura enhances the firepower of her wizards, and her spellcaster guardian teamwork benefit helps her soldiers shield the weaker wizards. Jila may not be a legendary leader, but her Inspirational Leadership feat helps her troops maintain their morale in the face of danger.

Caelys Drynn and Jila ir'Catar are just two examples of characters that can be created using the new rules in *Heroes of Battle.* Little adaptation is required to use this book in an **Eberron** campaign, since using the material presented is largely a matter of common sense. A Karrn captain is more likely to be a necromantic commander than a deathslayer commander, and a House Vadalis beast squad might have an animal commander or a feral commander.

In this article and the next one, we will examine ways to adapt specific material from *Heroes of Battle* to the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting.* We'll also consider some possible scenarios for military campaigns in the world of Eberron.

Battle Magic

Arcane magic has been part of daily life in Khorvaire for many an age. Thus, it's reasonable to assume that during a century of warfare, the various nations would devise deadly spells and other tools of war. Nearly all the spells and items presented in *Heroes of Battle* have logical places in Eberron, but you as Dungeon Master must decide whether this magic is available to all characters, or whether its secrets are known only to a few nations. The latter approach provides interesting plot options for espionage-oriented campaigns. For example, perhaps the Arcane Congress of Aundair wants to unlock the secret of the *animate legion* spell, but the only way to do so is to send spies into the great temple of Atur! Are your PCs up to the task?

Kinds of Magic

The various spellcasting classes all have their own approaches to battle magic, and a different in-game logic may apply to each. The following sections describe how to best utilize the material presented in *Heroes of Battle* with each kind of magic in an **Eberron** campaign.

Druids and Rangers

War is an integral part of the history of Eberron's druids. They were in the thick of the fight during the ancient battle between the Gatekeepers and the daelkyr, and in more modern times, they helped the people of western Aundair secede and join the Eldeen Reaches. The Wardens of the Wood may not possess much in the way of siege equipment, but a few highly mobile units with *hurtling stone* at their disposal could devastate larger massed forces or slow massive siege engines.

Bards

Although the Dhakaani goblinoids have begun to experiment with the tradition of wizardry, bards have always formed the backbone of the goblinoid magical tradition. The Valenar elves also commonly incorporate bards into their warbands to inspire troops with tales of their heroic ancestors. Because war is so deeply engrained in these two cultures, both hobgoblin and elf bards would logically have access to the military magic presented in *Heroes of Battle.* It's up to you as DM to decide whether other cultures can also make use of these spells, or whether a Brelish bard would have to travel with the Valenar to master their *drums of war* spell.

Clerics and Paladins

Technically, clerics can use any spells on the clerical spell list. For the purpose of campaign flavor, however, you may want to restrict certain spells to particular religions, thus placing them between domain spells and general spells in terms of availability. In this latter arrangement, *animate legion* and *desecrate battlefield* might be tied to the Blood of Vol, and *spiritual cavalry* might be limited to the Valenar, the Talenta halflings (who would use it to create dinosaur riders), or a dedicated priest of Dol Arrah. In like manner, *early twilight* could be a tool of the Shadow, the Blood of Vol, and the Dragon Below. Limiting the availability of divine battlefield spells in this manner can help to create distinct identities and battle strategies for the different armies. For example, anyone who battles Cults of the Dragon Below can expect enemy clerics to blot out the sun, but the Church of the Silver Flame would instead illuminate the sky so that its troops can continue the battle deep into the night.

Introducing new divine spells into a campaign is always tricky for the DM. After all, you're effectively saying, "Hey! There's this new spell that you've always been able to cast and which would have been useful in last night's game, but you've never bothered to prepare it so far!" To help bolster the thin logic of such situations, consider ruling that these spells are lost techniques that the characters must recover before they can use them. If only the Shulassakar know the secrets of drawing *consecrate battlefield* and *battlefield illumination* from the Silver Flame, a cleric who wants to cast these spells must first find a Shulassakar mentor. The same kind of logic applies to introducing bard and druid spells as well.

Wizards and Sorcerers

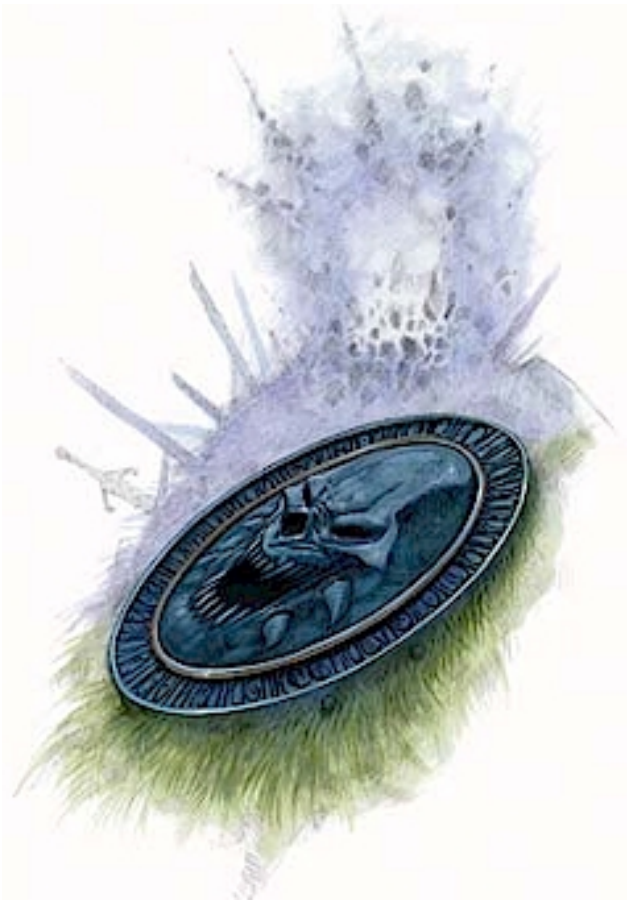
All the spells on the sorcerer/wizard list in *Heroes of Battle* are useful in mass combat, and all are logical developments of the Last War. The only question is whether any of them are used only by specific nations. As with limiting divine spells by religion, such an arrangement can lead to interesting adventure possibilities and add color to a campaign. For example, if only the Aundairian wizards have developed *shrieking blast,* characters can recognize their foe as soon as they hear the screams on the border.

My personal suggestions are to restrict both *animate legion* and *early twilight* to Karrnath, and to limit *battlemagic perception* and *shrieking blast* to Aundair. After all, arcane magic is a mainstay of the armies of Aundair, and *battlemagic perception* can help their countermages maintain this strategic advantage. The rest of the spells can be accessible to all arcane spellcasters in the Five Nations.

Dragonmarks

Leomund's billet and *aerial alarm* are excellent matches for the portfolios of the Mark of Hospitality and the Mark of Warding, respectively. Each house should certainly have dragonmarked foci that allow its heirs to produce these effects. If you as DM want to take this concept to extremes, you could restrict *Leomund's billet* to spellcasters who possess the Mark of Hospitality. Though it's not an actual dragonmarked power, a wizard, sorcerer, or bard would need to have the mark in order to cast the spell. Such an arrangement would provide the House of Hospitality with an important battlefield function, and nations would surely pay good gold for a halfling quartermaster who could produce instant shelter for her troops.

Magic Items



The magic items presented in Chapter Six of *Heroes of Battle* are all well suited to an Eberron campaign and can be used as templates for creating other magic weapons of war. The gnomes of Zilargo were probably the primary producers of alchemist's stone ammunition and *elemental rockshot,* but House Cannith could have manufactured magic siege engines and sold them to any nation. Disrupting siege engines played a critical role in Thrane's struggle, while the Order of the Emerald Claw provided Karrnath with *necromantic siege engines* and *banners of the unliving. Blast disks* were employed by many of the nations, especially Aundair. In fact, many battlefields still contain unexploded *blast disks* -- a fact that makes the exploration of the past a very dangerous thing. And while House Jorasco healers couldn't be everywhere at once, the house made a tidy sum on the sales of *blessed bandages* -- an item to which many old soldiers owe their lives.

Military Honors

In any military force, merit is generally recognized through advancement in rank and by the awarding of decorations. This section details the ranks and decorations available in the armies of the Five Nations.

Ranks

Rank plays an important role in any military campaign. Those used in the armies of the Five Nations are based on the old army of Galifar and are given below in ascending order.

Title	Ranking
Soldier	0
Sergeant	1
Lieutenant	2
Captain	3
Major	4
Colonel	5
General	6
Warlord	7

In Karrnath, warlord is also a hereditary title bestowed on the highest-ranking nobles of the land. Those who rise to the top of the military chain receive an additional qualifier. Thus, Karrn General Thauram is also a warlord, but he serves under First Warlord Gruden ir'Erdei, who fills the role of warlord in terms of military rank.

Decorations

Military decorations vary according to nation, and a complete list would require several pages. High-level decorations are often minor magic items designed to protect the honored hero. For example, Breland's greatest champions are often presented with *Handan's shroud,* a crimson *cloak of resistance +1.* Lesser decorations, such as the Black Badge of Shadukar or Cyre's Sword of the Southern Front, may be tied to specific battles or campaigns. In like manner, Karrns placed in command of an undead unit earn the right to wear the Skull of Atur.

Other specific decorations will be detailed in future publications as battles are described in greater detail. However, you as DM should feel free to devise your own rewards for victorious heroes.

About the Author

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Heroes of Battle, Part Two

By Keith Baker

Prestige Classes

Heroes of Battle presents four new prestige classes. While these classes could be found anywhere in Eberron, there are a few cultures that are especially well-suited to these classes.

Combat Medic. During the Last War, Thrane had the largest force of characters with levels in the combat medic PrC. Aside from its strong reliance on divine magic to bolster its troops, the ministry of the Silver Flame fights evil by merciful acts, and many members of the ministry are trained in the healing arts. In the armies of other nations, combat medics are usually agents of House Jorasco. The House of Healing maintains a corps of healers and combat medics, and many nations rely on these mercenary agents of mercy. Other combat medics are usually devotees of Boldrei, Olladra, or the Silver Flame. Even during the Last War, followers of the Flame were found throughout the Five Nations; many placed national loyalty before allegiance to Flamekeep.

Dread Commando. These soldiers can be found in any army, but the best known commando units are those of the Valenar elves and goblinoids of Darguun. Dread commandos are trained to be stealthy even while armored, making them excellent shock troops. Stealth is one of the primary weapons of the Valenar; while the elves are known for their terrifying cavalry charges, a small warband will often use guerilla tactics to defeat an enemy, striking with patience and precision. Valenar commandos usually begin as rangers or scouts.

In Darguun, all of the different races have their own dread commando traditions. Among the Dhakaani goblins, the taarka'khesh rangers frequently take two levels of dread commando to offset the penalties of armor. Goblin legends say that the Dhakaani emperor maintained a squad of elite warriors known as the Kech Nasaar, "Keepers of Night." The Kech Nasaar heroes possessed four or more levels of dread commando and wore full plate enchanted with the *shadow* and *silent moves* properties. They have not been seen since the fall of the empire, but some goblins say that the Kech Nasaar are watching in the shadows, waiting to stake their claim to the new throne.

Legendary Leader. Aundair has more war wizards than any other nation, Thrane has more paladins, clerics, and adepts than its neighbors, and Karrnath supplements its military might with necromancy. Breland relies on the skill and courage of its leaders to overcome these obstacles. Karrnath may be home to the Rekkenmark Academy, but many of the most innovative commanders of the war emerged from Breland, and their charisma and cunning often enabled their armies to victory against seemingly superior foes. While many of these heroes were slain over the course of the last century, Breland is still a land of legends. A DM using *Heroes of Battle* may want to modify the class levels of notable Brelish leaders to include a few levels in this PrC. Thus you could end up with King Boranel (CG male human aristocrat 2/fighter 5/legendary leader 3) or Handan Dol (LN male dwarf fighter 5/warrior 6/legendary leader 5). Handan Dol is the commander of the Redcloak Battalion in *Sharn, City of Towers*.

While Breland is renowned for its legendary leaders, every nation has its heroes. Next to Breland, Valenar is probably the most likely place to find members of this class, but all of the armies of the Five Nations had a legendary leader or two -- though many fell in battle.

War Weaver. The mystical tradition of the war weaver can be traced back to the elves of Aerenal. The Aereni know as much about life as they do about death, and they were the first to discover the technique of weaving threads of life together to benefit from a single spell. The Arcane Congress devoted considerable effort to replicating this technique, but it took the Last War to produce the breakthrough that brought war weaving to Aundair. By now, the other nations may have duplicated the techniques the Aundairians have been using against them. Or perhaps this task will fall to a party of adventurers: finding a way to steal the secrets of war weaving on behalf of Breland or Karrnath!

Fun with Warriors

While prestige classes are well and good, one of the principles of the *Eberron Campaign Setting* is that most NPCs use NPC classes, and are relatively low level. As a result, the armies of Khorvaire shouldn't be brimming with dread commandos, and legendary leaders really should be legendary. However, *Heroes of Battle* introduces a few feats that can add color to armies comprised primarily of warriors.

Guerilla Warrior and Guerilla Scout are excellent feats for creating a more versatile squad of warriors. These feats are especially appropriate for characters from the Eldeen Reaches, Shadow Marches, or Talenta Plains. You don't want to make the halfling a full rogue, but you want him to be sneakier than his Brelish counterparts? Make him a warrior with the Guerilla Warrior feat, wearing light armor and with maximum ranks in Hide and Move Silently.

Shield Wall and Coordinated Shot are ways to make masses of warriors more of a challenge for higher level opponents. Archers with the Ready Shot feat can also prove an unpleasant surprise to the half-orc barbarian used to charging his foes!

Choosing a War

So: you've decided to run a military adventure in Eberron. But where? And when? War has shaped the history of Eberron, and there are a host of battles to choose from.

The Last War

The conflict that has the greatest impact on the lives of most of the people of modern Khorvaire is the civil war that shattered the nation of Galifar, a century-long campaign optimistically known as the Last War.

When generating a campaign around the Last War, it is important to establish the goals. Are you exploring the very beginning of the war? Or the end? Is this a campaign of its own, or is it the prologue to an adventure set in the postwar era?

Building a war campaign as a bridge leading into a more traditional series of adventures set after the war is an excellent tool for bringing characters together and establishing them as adventurers in the modern age. After a few missions on the battlefield, adventurers can emerge as 3rd or 4th-level characters -- ready to tackle more powerful dungeons or challenges in the world beyond the war. The experience can also provide them with important connections to NPCs. An old war buddy might need a helping hand. A former commander could hire the party for dangerous work based on her knowledge of their skills. An enemy soldier could be met in the neutral ground of an inn -- do the characters still hold a grudge? Even their actions in the war could form the basis for future adventures. In one of their early missions, the heroes must help secure a stockpile of gold in the vaults of Metrol. After the Mourning, they are among the only people who know the location of the vault -- can they lead an expedition into the Mournland to recover the gold? And what if it's already been seized by the Lord of Blades?

A full history of the Last War is sadly beyond the scope of this article. A few of the major battles are mentions in the *Eberron Campaign Setting* and *The Five Nations*, and others will be described over the course of time. For now, look at the map, choose your battlefields and combatants, and build from there. All of the nations fought each other at one point or another, and each nation had its own flavor on the field of battle. While all of the Five Nations used magic, Aundair made the greatest use of arcane magic, while Thrane had strong divine support from the Church of the Silver Flame. Karrnath combined grim discipline with the power of necromancy. Cyre made extensive use of mercenaries in the early stages of the war, and used the greatest number of warforged troops towards the end of it. And Breland relied on its clever generals and industrial capability, outmatching its enemies' abilities in the production of siege engines and other mundane tools of war. Chapter Two and Chapter Three of *Heroes of Battle* presents a host of ideas for adventures and battlefield encounters. Choose your sides, and make sure that the forces involved reflect the nature of each nation involved; between the *Eberron Campaign Setting* book and *Heroes of Battle*, you should have all the tools you need.

The Lycanthropic Purge

In 832 YK, the Church of the Silver Flame responded to the pleas of the people of Western Aundair and Breland. These regions were under attack by waves of shapeshifters -- packs of savage werewolves and cunning wererats, who were carving a swath of death and infection across western Khorvaire. This was the beginning of the Lycanthropic Purge, which started as a war against these vicious killers but ultimately resulted in the virtual extinction of all lycanthropes.

The Lycanthropic Purge can be an interesting backdrop for adventure, regardless of which side the party chooses to explore. In the early stage of the conflict, players could assume the roles of Silver Flame templars

protecting an Aundairian village against an anticipated onslaught: but will the lycanthropes rely on brute force, or seek to infiltrate and infect from within? A higher level party could lead a force against a shapeshifter stronghold deep in the Eldeen Reaches, fighting both lycanthropes and the beasts they control through their empathic abilities. Alternately, players could assume the role of shifters or noble lycanthropes caught in a region under siege by Silver Puritans. Can they find a way to break through the enemy lines and lead any innocents to the gates of Lamannia?

For the most part, the Purge is a struggle between the discipline and divine magic of the Silver Flame and the raw power of the lycanthropes. The shapeshifters' ability to hide among humanity and to swell their ranks through infection adds to the challenge of the battles.

The Battles of the Future

No one won the Last War. The conflict was brought to an abrupt halt by the terrible destruction of the Mourning. The nature of the Mourning remains a mystery, and for the moment no nation dares to fully return to the field of battle until the threat of the Mourning has been laid to rest.

But tensions remain -- and the war is not truly over. The Valenar elves still battle the Darguuls in the Mournland, and cross blades with the Karrns in the Talenta Plains. The lords of Aundair eye the Eldeen Reaches with covetous eyes. The survivors of Cyre seek a new land to replace their lost kingdom. The Thranes still despise the Karrns, and the feeling is mutual.

These struggles could be a temporary distraction from the normal events of a campaign, or they could be the focus of it. Perhaps the party are members of a Valenar warband, and they are traveling the east in search of glory for their ancestors, joining in any battle they can find. Maybe they are Karrns stationed at Fort Bones, fighting elf and halfling raiders while dealing with the internal conflicts between the soldiers loyal to King Kaius and those who favor the Emerald Claw. Perhaps they are Dhakaani goblins, engaged in full-scale wars with the other Kech clans to determine the future of the empire. Or maybe the Treaty of Thronehold finally breaks and the heroes must take sides as the remnants of the Five Nations return to the war for the Kingdom of Galifar.

The advantage of these modern-day conflicts is that players don't know the outcome. In a campaign based in the Last War, the players know that it will eventually come to an end with the Treaty of Thronehold. If the battles begin again, the outcome is a mystery. Will one nation finally seize regain control of the old kingdom? Or will the Mourning come again? Are these the final days of Eberron?

This ideas are just the beginning. Adventurers could explore the ancient war between dragons and rakshasa, or the elven rebellion against the giants. They could take the role of the orcish Gatekeepers fighting against the horrors of Xoriat, or the dragonmarked houses battling the aberrant forces of Lord Halas Tarkanan during the War of the Mark. Conflict is part of the foundation of Eberron -- and *Heroes of Battle* gives you everything you need to set these adventures in motion!

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of

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Weapons of Legacy

By Keith Baker

This installment of *Eberron Expanded* focuses on adapting the material from *Weapons of Legacy* for use in an **Eberron** campaign. *Weapons of Legacy* introduces legacy items -- magic items with the potential to rival artifacts in power, though not all of that potential is available to the user right away. Instead, the power of the item grows with that of the possessor. Furthermore, only those who uncover the history of the item and perform rites and rituals to honor its legacy can uncover and use its greatest powers.

Typically, only the greatest powers of Eberron -- such as the dragons of Argonnessen, the giants of Xen'drik, or the fallen rajahs of the Age of Demons -- can produce artifacts. However, a legacy item could emerge from any source, empowered by the history it has helped to create. For example, Malleon the Reaver bathed the shores of Khorvaire in goblin blood, and his axe *Redwave* still harbors the shadow of his hatred within it. The *Crown of Galifar,* missing now for almost a century, is an item of great power, but only wearer who has proven her worthiness to rule can harness its true potential.

In addition to these random items plucked from the hands of history's heroes, two particular cultures are highly appropriate as sources for legacy items: the Dhakaani Empire and the Tairnadal elves.

The Empire of Dhakaan

The Dhakaani goblinoids ruled Khorvaire for seven thousand years before the Xoriat incursion shattered the proud civilization they had built. This goblin nation devoted itself to the art of war -- both its practice and its tools -- and its armorers and weaponsmiths were among the finest the world has ever seen. The Dhakaani worshiped no gods; rather, they revered the empire itself, recounting the deeds and history of the great heroes who defined it for all to hear.

Taken together, these facts present a compelling case for a strong tradition of legacy items among the Dhakaani. Charged with the history of the empire -- the conquest of Khorvaire, the wars with elves and demons, and the final, disastrous conflict with the daelkyr -- these weapons were made for goblin hands, though they could serve any noble warrior equally well. Today, the Heirs of Dhakaan -- the clans that went into hiding as the great goblinoid empire began to crumble -- are searching for these ancient relics, which could aid them substantially in re-establishing their former glory.

Most Dhakaani legacy items probably lie amid the ruins of the empire, though a fair number could also be buried in ancient battlefields. Since the Dhakaani have an austere culture devoted primarily to war, most of their legacy items are likely to be arms or armor, though instruments of the duur'kala bards or regalia worn by great generals or emperors would also be appropriate.

The legacy rituals for these items should be tied to war and might range from performing a small act of courage to playing a decisive role as the architect of a battle. When designing a ritual, keep in mind that the Dhakaani were not simple warmongers. One of the cornerstones of their culture was the premise that the strong (bugbears

and hobgoblins) must protect the weak (goblins), so a weapon or shield might require a sacrifice in keeping with this philosophy.

Each Dhakaani legacy item is a piece of goblin history that the goblins want back, so carrying one presents a danger to any nongoblinoid character. A typical city goblin or soldier of the Ghaal'duur might not recognize the item, but the Heirs of Dhakaan would certainly be offended by an outsider who presumed to steal one of the empire's great treasures and wield it as his own. A character who works with the Heirs of Dhakaan might eventually earn enough respect to be considered an honorary goblin -- and thus a worthy bearer of the legacy item -- but considerable bloodshed is likely to occur first.

Dhakanni Legacy Items

With a few changes, the following specific items from *Weapons of Legacy* could be appropriate for the Dhakaani. The Eberron history of each item is given first, followed by a bulleted list of changes needed to adapt it. If no such list is given, the item's powers remain the same.

Fiendkiller's Flail

This weapon was originally forged to battle the Lords of Dust. Later, the smiths enhanced its power when the legions of Xoriat invaded.

- Add byeshk to the weapon's scourge of fiends ability.
- Change sense fiends to detect evil outsiders with the native subtype, extraplanar creatures from Xoriat, or aberrations.

Guurgal

Since the orcs of Eberron do not have the same militant tradition as the goblinoids do, Guurgal was not the weapon of an orcish horde. Rather, it was wielded by one of the first emperors, who put out his own eye in a display of courage and resolve.

- Change all orc and half-orc references to goblinoid.
- The ritual for the lesser legacy involves communing with the spirits of the ancient emperors rather than Gruumsh.
- The greater legacy ritual requires seeking out the shade of Emperor Bruug Dhakaan, which has been trapped in the Lair of the Keeper.

Skull Lash

The *Skull Lash* predates the empire. Despite its disturbing appearance, it was often borne by the emperor or the wisest of the duur'kala, who used its abilities to gain insight.

Wargird's Armor

Built for a Dhakaani officer, this armor bonded with the spirit of an orc berserker from the Shadow Marches who was slain during one of the empire's efforts to create a buffer zone on its western border.

Other Options

The above items are just a few examples of weapons from the book that can relate to the Dhakanni Empire, but many other items could easily be adapted as well. In particular, since chain weapons are common among the Dhakaani, a spiked chain would make an excellent weapon of legacy. Alternatively, an existing weapon from the book could be converted to a spiked chain.

The Tairnadal

The warrior culture of the Tairnadal elves gave birth to the nation of Valenar. Every Tairnadal devotes himself to the memory of a particular ancestor and seeks to honor and emulate that person's great deeds throughout his own life.

Such a culture is a perfect match for the items in *Weapons of Legacy.* Any elf who can reclaim a treasured possession of an ancient elf hero is certain to devote himself to mastering its history and its power.

Since the Tairnadal are accomplished archers, riders, and masters of stealth and guerrilla warfare, any weapons or items tied to these functions could be especially appropriate for a Tairnadal legacy. But although the Tairnadal have a martial culture, they also respect the role that arcane magic can play in battle, and they are fond of decorative clothing and jewelry. Thus, almost any item could qualify as a Tairnadal legacy item.

If desired, you could restrict the use of elven items of legacy to elf champions. Since the bearer is drawing on the memory of the heroic elf who first used the item, it may not respond to people of other races. However, a human or other creature might someday be able to earn the respect of the ancient spirit, and thus the right to carry on the legacy.

Tarinadal Legacy Items

While any legacy weapon can be adapted to the Tairnadal with a few adjustments, a few of the items mentioned in *Weapons of Legacy* are especially well suited to the history of the elves. None of these items require changes to their powers -- only to their histories.

Bow of the Black Archer

Many drow served the giants in the ancient Xen'drik uprising, using the powers of darkness to battle their cousins. In Eberron, Shevarash did not become a god, but he was a legendary archer who slew hundreds of drow. In fact, many say it was his wrath that struck down Valderion.

Desert Wind

This item was the tool of a great elf prince in the dry regions of Xen'drik -- one of the first provinces to stand against the giants. *Desert Wind* was lost when the Tairnadal first came to the Blade Desert ten thousand years ago, and the Valenar are still combing the land for any sign of it.

Stalker's Bow

The elf huntress Failine acquired this weapon from a drow assassin, who used it to prey on elf rebels. After reaching Aerenal, however, the bow quickly disappeared. Rumor holds that the *Stalker's Bow* is now in the hands of House Thuranni, but wherever it is, the Tairnadal descendents of Failine would like it back.

Other Options

In addition to the above choices, a few objects unique to the Tairnadal culture would make excellent legacy items. You can adapt items from the book to use these forms, or simply build new ones.

Valenar Double Scimitar: The history of this weapon (described on page 119 of the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting*) dates back to Xen'drik, and Tairnadal warriors take great pride in their skill with it.

Zaelshin: The zaelshin, or spirit bond, is an amulet bearing the sigil of a Tairnadal elf's patron ancestor. The zaelshin tu is a similar brooch that holds an actual physical relic of the ancestor -- usually a sliver of bone or a tooth. A zaelshin tu makes an excellent legacy item, but only an elf with a bond to the item's particular patron ancestor should be able to unlock its powers.

Zaelta: The zaelta, or spirit mask, is a veil that covers the lower face. It is intended to help the wearer submerge his identity in that of his ancestor. A zaelta that once served as a shroud for the ancestor could easily hold a powerful legacy.

Legacy Feats and Legacy Champions

As members of the cultures with the longest histories, Dhakaani goblins and Tairnadal elves are the logical choices for legacy champions, and they probably developed most, if not all, of the legacy feats. However, members of other cultures could certainly learn the same skills through contact with those civilizations. For example, a member of the Wayfinder Foundation who has lived among the Dhakaani might have studied the

tradition of the legacy guardian and then applied it to his own weapon, *Bloodwave.*

Founding a Legacy

In the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting,* the player characters are supposed to be the greatest heroes of the age -- or, at least, they have the potential to become such. Thus, it is entirely appropriate for their deeds to create new legacies, which may be passed down into future generations. Legacy creation is especially appropriate for heroes who are facing the greatest villains of Eberron. The blade that strikes down a daelkyr lord, the shield that stands against Erandis d'Vol, the hammer that shatters the sword wielded by the Lord of Blades -- these are the items that give birth to legends.

Warforged as Legacy Items

Eberron allows one intriguing option not found in other settings: the warforged. The body of a warforged can be enhanced just as if it were a suit of magic armor. A warforged character who becomes a legacy item may have been created for some secret purpose he knows nothing about. Infused with power by Onatar and the Dragon Above, he must bide his time until his true destiny is revealed.

Allowing warforged to become legacy items is an option that a DM must carefully consider before allowing it in her campaign. After all, a legacy cannot easily be taken away or destroyed, but it could certainly make encounters with the Lord of Blades more interesting!

Monsters of Legacy

The concept of monsters of legacy is highly appropriate for Eberron. Kazdurakashtan is a dragon -- a Chamber observer who was hidden in Cyre when the Mourning struck, and was twisted into a far more terrible creature. Belashyrra, the Lord of Eyes, is one of the most terrifying of the daelkyr. The Children of Winter tell tales of Coldfang, a dire serpent infused with the raw power of the Gloaming. And tales of the night hag Sora Kell have been used to terrify children since humans first came to Khorvaire. These creatures are the most obvious monsters of legacy, but many other legendary creatures could also be lurking in the shadows of Eberron, just waiting for new heroes to emerge!

Other Weapons of Legacy

The Tairnadal and Dhakaani sections above mention only a few specific items from *Weapons of Legacy,* but translating any object presented in the book into one suitable for your Eberron campaign is a simple matter. For example, *Infiltrator* could be tied into the split between House Phiarlan and House Thuranni, or even an elven betrayal dating back to Xen'drik. *Mau-Jehe* could have been forged by the first kalashtar, and the *Simple Bow* could have its roots in the monasteries of Adar. *Full Moon's Trick,* a remnant of one of the fallen innocents of the Lycanthropic Purge, might be hidden among the shifters of the Eldeen Reaches. *Dymondheart* could have been handed down from Gatekeeper to Gatekeeper, while *Treebrother* might actually be a shaft cut from the Great Druid Oalian himself. Just use your imagination!

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., he has produced material for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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Libris Mortis, Part One

By Keith Baker

This installment of *Eberron Expanded* focuses on adapting the material from *Libris Mortis: The Book of Undead* for use in an **Eberron** campaign. From the Queen of the Dead to the skeletal armies of Karrnath, undead have always played a critical role in Eberron. *Libris Mortis* presents new information on the physiology and psychology of undead, plus a host of spells, feats, and prestige classes for both undead and those who battle them. This two-part article discusses ways to give this material an Eberron-specific twist.

Necromancers of the Modern Age

Outside of Karrnath, magic involving negative energy and the undead is often treated with suspicion. Few people care about minor necromantic spells such as *fear* and *ray of enfeeblement,* but a wizard with a zombie companion or an undead graft is likely to earn an unfriendly reaction in most of Khorvaire's nations. As a result, many of Eberron's greatest necromancers prefer to work in isolation. Some draw on the Shadow and the Keeper for inspiration, thereby further tainting the magic in the eyes of the public. Others approach the topic from an agnostic perspective, viewing necromantic magic as a way of channeling and shaping the negative energy that flows from the heart of Mabar.

One organization that fully embraces necromancy is the Blood of Vol. Though currently out of favor with the Karrnathi throne, the Blood of Vol boasts many followers in both Karrnath and the Lhazaar Principalities, and it is the primary source of necromantic magic in present-day Eberron. But what magic is available to the followers of the Blood? Are the entire contents of *Libris Mortis* at the disposal of an agent of this organization? Did pale masters serve in the armies of Karrnarth?

In a long-running campaign, the sudden introduction of a whole new set of spells raises many difficult questions. For example, why didn't Vol use encysting magic the last time anyone fought her? Furthermore, many of the options outlined in *Libris Mortis* could have a significant impact on the balance of power in the world. As dangerous as an army of Karrnathi skeletons is, one created by a necromancer with the Corpsecrafter and Destruction Retribution feats would be far worse.

The decision to add material is always up to you as DM, but how you choose to accomplish the task can make the difference between endless questions and a seamless integration. In particular, elements from *Libris Mortis* can be much more interesting if they are added organically. Suppose Erandis d'Vol possesses a few of the secrets described in *Libris Mortis* that she shares with her inner circle, and that a few high-level members of the Blood of Vol have undead grafts or the ability to cast *blade of pain and fear*. But Karrnath doesn't yet have

corpsecrafters or true necromancers. In such a model, a PC could be the first person in the modern age to master a spell from *Libris Mortis.* Alternatively, the introduction of much of this material could be a consequence of the party's failure in an adventure. For example, suppose the party stopped Vol from destroying the world but allowed her to escape with the *Qabalrin Codex.* The next time the party clashes with the Emerald Claw, her ghouls have new spells and levels of lurking terror.

Limiting the spell knowledge of wizards is a simple task, but what about clerics? A cleric can normally cast any divine spell of a given level, so how does he "learn" new spells that are introduced? And what about Charisma-based arcane casters? What determines when a sorcerer is qualified to add *ghoul gauntlet* to his spell list? The possibilities are infinite, but the options outlined below are good places to start.

- Even though a cleric need not have the same academic understanding of a spell as a wizard does, he must still comprehend its basic nature. Even divine spells have components, and knowledge of a verbal component is not automatic. The Song of the Keeper is a rare, holy text of the Dark Six that teaches clerics the words and gestures needed to cast *consumptive field.* Unlike a wizard, a cleric needs to read the book only once to learn the spells, but he does need the book to set him on the path.
- The character may have to undergo some type of ritual before he is capable of casting a certain spell. Any cleric can ask the Shadow for *energy ebb,* but it will grant the spell only to a priest who has shed his blood on the basalt altar of Qalatesh. This concept works just as well for sorcerers as it does for clerics -- if a sorcerer wants to learn the spell, he must perform the required ritual sometime before he reaches the required level. The same process is also appropriate for feats. If you as DM want to allow a feat such as Necropotent in the game but need to explain why everyone doesn't have it, you can say that a PC has to drink the blood of a vampire before he can take it.
- Mortals cannot ask for the spell -- it must be granted by a deity, powerful outsider, or ancient undead being. This model also lets you highlight the significance of a PC or a particularly important NPC -- the character may be the only person in the modern age who can cast a particular spell or take a special feat.

Ancient Masters of Necromancy

So where does Erandis d'Vol go to learn new necromantic techniques? If she doesn't know the arts of the corpsecrafter, who does? Here are a few ideas with which you can build a rationale.

Khyber's Children

The most terrifying powers in Eberron are the overlords of the Age of Demons: the first children of Khyber. Each of these spirits rivals the deities of other settings in sheer power -- and even while imprisoned, they can touch the world through dreams and the actions of their servants.

The overlord Katashka possesses power over death. In the ancient battle against the dragons, Katashka raised a host of horrors, and those that survived the war are now the oldest undead creatures in existence. Katashka was imprisoned at the end of that conflict, but a number of his rakshasa servants still remain at large among the Lords of Dust. At the DM's discretion, these malefic spirits may have any of the new sorcerer/wizard spells presented in *Libris Mortis,* or possibly even levels in the pale master prestige class. A wizard can learn this magic by dealing with the rakshasas, but what price will he have to pay?

Katashka is not truly a god, so he cannot grant spells. However, he can guide the thoughts of those who worship him and help them to draw dark magic from the heart of Khyber itself. Death cults have appeared throughout

history -- the Dhakaani records speak of a sect of necromancers wiped out by a powerful emperor, and several stories of human death cults predate the rise of Galifar.

Katashka's cultists gain access to the Deathbound, Undeath, and Evil domains. In addition, people born in the vicinity of his prison may be further touched by his darkness. It's up to you as DM to decide exactly where he is buried, but this concept forms a good basis for the Tomb-Tainted Soul feats.

Any of the gods presented in *Libris Mortis* could be adapted as overlords of the first age, though that status represents a step down for most of them. Doresain would be an especially appropriate choice -- a party exploring a ruin from the Age of Demons could be surprised by zakyas with the powers of gravetouched ghouls!

The Qabalrin

The first mortals to delve into the necromantic arts were some elves collectively known as the Qabalrin, who lived in isolation in Xen'drik. Legends claim that the Qabalrin learned the secrets of magic from the Shadow itself. Whether this tale is truth or hyperbole, the Qabalrin certainly possessed incredible skill. They are said to have created the first humanoid vampires, and a number of their greatest citizens reputedly became vampires -- only to be trapped and entombed after a feud that erupted between rival schools. The city of the Qabalrin was later destroyed by the fall of a massive dragonshard, an event that the giants claimed was the result of divine wrath.

Some believe that the traditions of the line of Vol (which in turn formed the foundation of the Blood of Vol) were drawn from Qabalrin teachings. But even if that assertion is true, most of the Qabalrin's secrets remain hidden in the ruins of the Ring of Storms. Their greatest treasure, however, is the knowledge that remains in the minds of the ancient vampires who are still buried beneath the ruins of their once-great city.

Virtually any sort of necromantic knowledge could be attributed to the Qabalrin. These elves certainly knew how to create undead grafts, and some of them probably became pale masters, masters of shrouds, and true necromancers. Rare spells might still be found in Qabalrin vaults, and knowledge recovered from their ruins could provide a character with access to feats such as Corpsecrafter or Necromantic Presence.

On the other hand, the knowledge of the Qabalrin is as valuable to the undead as it is to the living. Thus, you could rule that certain monstrous feats can be gained only through the use of Qabalrin rituals. So if Erandis d'Vol wants to take Contagious Paralysis, she must first explore Xen'drik. Or perhaps the secrets of the master vampire prestige class are known only to the entombed lords of the Qabalrin. But these ancient vampires are creatures of epic power, and their release could have terrible consequences for Eberron.

The clerics of the Qabalrin drew directly on the power of Mabar, though some chose to personify it through the lens of the Shadow. A cleric who recovers the texts of the Qabalrin and chooses to follow this path could gain access to the Deathbound, Evil, Magic, and Undeath domains.

At your discretion, the followers of the Evening Glory could have been a subsect within the Qabalrin. In that model, the Evening Glory herself could have been one of the first Qabalrin vampires, whose motives were less malevolent than those of her comrades. While she would not possess divine rank and could not personally grant spells, she could still serve as a spiritual focus for a religion.

The Closed Circle

The In the early days of Galifar, three wizards' circles took shape in the southern kingdom: the Esoteric Order of Aureon, the Guild of Starlight and Shadows, and the Closed Circle. The wizards of the Closed Circle specialized in transmutation, conjuration, and necromancy, and they sought to unlock the secrets of the daelkyr and the Qabalrin, as well as the power of the Dragon Below. In 641 YK, the Closed Circle was obliterated by the combined force of the Church of the Silver Flame and its two rival circles. But its workshops and mageholds, filled with dark and deadly secrets, may still be hidden across Breland or Darguun.

Erandis d'Vol has thousands of years of tradition to draw upon. So how is it that the ruins of the Closed Circle -- an order that only lasted a few centuries -- can have anything to offer her? The fact that Erandis is drawing upon tradition can serve as an anchor when it comes to innovation. The humans of the Closed Circle were unorthodox and inventive, and their merging of daelkyr techniques with necromancy is an excellent explanation of phenomena such as the Mother Cyst feat and its related spells. So if you want to stage a race to keep the Blood of Vol from gaining new necromantic techniques, you don't have to send adventurers to Xen'drik -- the darkness could be hidden beneath Sharn, in the ruined fortress of the Closed Circle.

The Vampires of the Blood of Vol

The faith of the Blood of Vol is based on the idea that the undead are champions of the church. Worshipers willingly give their blood to vampires to strengthen them in battle. But according to *Libris Mortis,* the greatest force driving a vampire is its inescapable craving for life energy -- a hunger far more lethal to the victim than a little gift of blood. Such a system of sustenance represents a considerable sacrifice on the part of the faithful, and one that would quickly decimate Blood of Vol sects. Thus, vampires associated with the Blood of Vol should have a lesser craving for life energy. While they still require it to survive, the satiation period is 7 days, the Will DC save is 15, and the damage is reduced to 1d4 Wisdom. The simplest solution is to apply this adjustment to all vampires in the setting, but another strain of vampirism could exist if you wish. In that case, only undead whose roots can be traced back to the Qabalrin would have this lesser craving, while those created by Katashka would have an unquenchable thirst.

In the next installment, we'll take a look at the Deathguard, Silver Flame adherents, and other characters who fight the undead, along with a general look at prestige classes, monsters, and other aspects of *Libris Mortis*!

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., he has produced material for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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Libris Mortis, Part Two

By Keith Baker

The first part of this article examined groups and religions that be could used as sources for the sinister aspects of *Libris Mortis*. This section looks at the groups that fight the undead along with a few additional aspects of the book.

Fighting the Darkness

Libris Mortis presents a host of tools and techniques for fighting the undead: feats, spells, prestige classes, and more weapons against the restless dead. Like the rest of the material in the book, these elements could be made available to all characters at once. However, it can be more interesting to limit these techniques to specific religions or groups as described in the first part of this article.

The following organizations are at the forefront of the war against the undead.

The Deathguard

The Undying Court teaches that negative undead are conduits to Mabar and that merely by existing, these creatures slowly drain away the life-force of Eberron itself. For the most part, the Aereni prefer to avoid contact with the outside world, but the war against undead is a danger that bypasses all borders. The soldiers engaged in this conflict are known as the Deathguard, an elite unit dedicated to the Undying Court and to eradicating the taint of undeath from the world.

The Deathguard is largely comprised of clerics, paladins, and fighters who have access to the Sacred Purifier prestige class, the Hunter of the Dead PrC from *Complete Warrior*, and the Sacred Exorcist PrC from *Complete Divine*. The order also includes a small corps of cleric/rogues with levels in the Shadowbane Stalker PrC from *Complete Adventurer* -- these agents are often equipped with *ghost strike* weapons, allowing them to make sneak attacks against incorporeal undead. In a world where most NPCs possess NPC class levels, the Deathguard are among the best at what they do, chosen from the most gifted soldiers and priests of Aerenal. But they are few in number, and the loss of any Deathguard is a blow to the Undying Court.

Clerics of the Deathguard can use the spells from *Libris Mortis* designed to fight undead (*ghost trap, ghost touch armor, protection from negative energy, spawn screen*, *undead bane weapon,* and similar effects) and should have access to many of the new feats. Aerenal is known for its manifest zones linked to Irian, and rituals performed in these regions infuse the Deathguard with positive energy. This in turn allows them to take feats such as Enduring Life, Empower Turning, Sacred Vitality, and Unquenchable Flame of Life. Participation in such a ritual could easily be a prerequisite for PCs who wish to take these feats. If a character can earn the respect of the Deathguard, she may be initiated into these mysteries.

The servants of the Deathguard are proud folk who believe that their calling places them above mortal laws. Others, however, do not share this view. The elves are generally required to act covertly. While they may strike at any undead creature or any necromancer that creates negative undead, they seek to battle the most significant targets -- powerful vampire lords, leaders of the Blood of Vol, and the like. Meanwhile, Erandis d'Vol despises the Deathguard and always takes any opportunity to eliminate a Deathguard unit. Because of this, Deathguard warriors may be unexpected allies in any battle against the Blood of Vol ... or they could show up unexpectedly as adventurers engaged in a delicate undercover operation!

Finally, the elves of Aerenal are the obvious source for positoxins. The jungles of Aerenal contain a host of unusual plants, many of which have been altered by exposure to the energies of Irian and Mabar. Between their long studies of the energies of these planes and their hatred of negative undead, the Aereni are the logical force to have developed these unusual tools.

The Silver Flame

The templars of the Silver Flame fight supernatural evil in all forms, and most creatures that prey on the blood and lifeforce of mortals qualify. There is one area in which the clerics of the Silver Flame stand supreme -- exorcism. Any Silver Flame priest with the Exorcism domain should gain the following benefits:

- Access to the *ghost trap* spell (assuming he is of sufficient level to cast it).
- +4 to Knowledge (religion) checks made to force a haunting presence to manifest.

As a rule, the soldiers of the Silver Flame do not have the focus or knowledge of undead possessed by the Deathguard and rarely possess the specialized feats, spells, and PrCs of *Libris Mortis*. In the long struggle with the undead armies of Karrnath, however, the clerics of Thrane learned to hone their skills at turning lesser undead. Honored clerics are brought before the Fountain of Flame at the heart of Flamekeep, where they are blessed in a ritual performed by the Keeper of the Flame herself. Those who receive this blessing can choose to take the Empower Turning, Heighten Turning, and Quicken Turning feats (when they are able to acquire new feats).

In general, followers of the Silver Flame consider obvious undead creatures to be dangerous and unnatural, and they will have a hostile reaction toward those who traffic with the undead.

The Sovereign Host

Within the Sovereign Host, persecution of the undead is the dominion of Dol Arrah, the Sovereign of Sun and Sacrifice. When the Shadow and the Keeper unleash their horrors against the living, it is the light of Dol Arrah that drives them back. Because the Sovereign Host is a pantheistic religion, most clerics of the Host are invoking Dol Arrah when they turn undead; those with the Sun domain have studied her rituals more closely and are thus able to perform greater turnings.

Generalist priests of the Sovereign Host are not expected to battle undead on a regular basis, so they have no access to the specialized abilities of *Libris Mortis*. There are, however, a number of orders dedicated to Dol Arrah that draw on these specialized tools. The Blades of the Sun is a line of paladins -- when properly sanctified, its members may take the Divine Accuracy or Sacred Vengeance feats and gain access to the *undead bane weapon* spell. A number of Dol Arrah's priests have formed ties with the Deathguard and learned their techniques; these priests often offer shelter and support to elves operating far from Aerenal.

Followers of Dol Arrah may take the Radiant Servant of Pelor prestige class presented in *Complete Divine*. A few have learned the path of the Sacred Purifier from the Deathguard, but this has yet to come into common use. A player character who wishes to take Purifier levels will most likely need to turn to Aerenal.

The Red Watchers

Magic of Eberron introduces a new organization dedicated to fighting the undead -- the Red Watchers, who seek to cleanse the land of Karrnath. The Red Watchers have developed their own unique prestige class, the Deadgrim. Characters who follow this path walk a line between life and death. The Tomb-Tainted Soul feats are an excellent way to further develop this ambiguity. The Ghost Scarred feat is also highly appropriate for Red Watchers. Beyond this, the Red Watchers are not a religion in their own right. Most members of the organization come from a background with the Silver Flame or the Sovereign Host, as outlined above.

Deathless and *Libris Mortis*

The *Eberron Campaign Setting* includes a new creature type that has considerable overlap with the undead: the deathless, the best known of which are the Undying of Aerenal. The deathless are being sustained after death by positive energy and the devotion of the descendants.How do the deathless interact with *Libris Mortis*?

One simple answer is to allow the deathless to take appropriate feats as if they were of the undead type. For example, deathless can be turned or destroyed by an evil cleric, making Improved Turn Resistance an excellent choice for a powerful Undying councilor. Positive Energy Resistance could be converted to Negative Energy Resistance for the deathless. Lifebond can be used to represent the strength a deathless gains from a particularly faithful follower (most likely a descendant), while Lifesense reflects its ability to perceive the positive energy that flows through living things.

The Tomb Warden prestige class is appropriate for the deathless, especially the Undying Soldiers who guard the City of the Dead. The Death's Chosen prestige class could be modified to become the Chosen of the Deathless. Remove the alignment restriction (as most deathless are good), but leave the Unnatural Aura. Even though they are animated by positive energy, the deathless are still unnatural beings.

The Vampires of the Blood of Vol

The faith of the Blood of Vol is based on the idea that the undead are champions of the church. Worshippers willingly give their blood to vampires to strengthen them in battle. *Libris Mortis* introduces new systems for undead sustenance.

According to *Libris Mortis*, the greatest force driving a vampire is its inescapable craving for life energy -- a hunger far more lethal to the victim than a little gift of blood. This is a considerable sacrifice on the part of the faithful, and one that would quickly decimate Blood of Vol sects. Because of this, vampires associated with the Blood of Vol should have a lesser craving for life energy. While they still require it to survive, the satiation period is seven days, the Will DC save is 15, and damage is reduced to 1d4 Wisdom. The simplest solution is to apply this to all vampires in the setting, but at the DM's discretion there could be another strain of vampirism -- undead whose roots can be traced back to the Qabalrin have this lesser craving, while those created by Katashka have an unquenchable thirst.

Undead as Characters

Libris Mortis provides class breakdowns for many of the common undead. An undead character can provide many interesting opportunities for roleplaying: once a Silver Flame paladin, you were slain only to rise as a ghoul; you have managed to overcome your bestial instincts, but what do you do now? Alternatively, you may be one of the champions of the Blood of Vol, granted the powers of undeath to defend the living. You have been disheartened to discover the corruption within your own church, but you still believe in your cause.

Undead characters will have a difficult time in the Five Nations unless they are able to conceal their condition.

Not surprisingly, most people consider the undead to be dangerous monsters, and any of the groups mentioned in this article might attempt to destroy an undead character. Even those who don't fight or flee will generally be unfriendly at best, with the notable exceptions of followers or the Blood of Vol or the people of Droaam, who are surprisingly cosmopolitan in their views.

To make matters worse, the undead have no rights under the Code of Galifar. If you're a ghoul, a priest of Dol Arrah can destroy you with no legal consequences. It's a hard path to follow, but it can certainly make for an interesting journey.

The Monsters of *Libris Mortis*

Libris Mortis presents dozens of new monsters, and examining them all would take an article in its own right. Here are suggestions for how a few of these creatures could be placed in Eberron.

- The *Dream Vestige* is supposedly formed from the death of an entire city. It is a perfect match for the Mournland, where hundreds of thousands were killed. Powerful quori may possess the ability to control dream vestiges, which would add a deadly weapon to the arsenal of the Dreaming Dark. The vestige's *dream travel* ability lets it strike anywhere in the world without warning!
- The *Boneyard* is another creature that could be found in the Mournland or elsewhere in the Five Nations, especially on battlefields where large armies of Karrnathi undead were defeated.
- The *Evolved Undead* template can be an interesting way to make ancient powers such as Erandis d'Vol and the vampire lords of the Qabalrin even deadlier than expected. After forty thousand years of evolution, a Qabalrin vampire might possess +12 turn resistance, fast healing 18, and a half-dozen spell-like abilities!
- The city of Sharaat was destroyed by the death curses of a group of mighty aberrant lords, including the infamous Lady of the Plague. The city of Sharn was built over the ruins of Sharaat, and many say that her curse still lingers in the depths. As a result, the *Bloodmote Cloud, Bone Rat Swarm, Corpse Rat Swarm,* or *Dire Maggot* could all be found beneath the city. Perhaps some part of the Lady of the Plague survived her death -- this would be an excellent opportunity to place a powerful *Swarm Shifter* deep below Sharn. It may have taken her centuries to take this form, but now that she is back she releases disease and a wave of undead vermin on the world above to gain vengeance on the dragonmarked houses that destroyed her!

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., he has produced material for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

Player's Handbook II

By Keith Baker

The *Player's Handbook II* sourcebook provides new classes, character options, and inspiration for **Dungeons & Dragons** players. The majority of this material is setting-neutral. The chapters on building character identity, developing adventuring groups, and rebuilding characters are universal and equally useful to all players and Dungeon Masters.

When it comes to new feats, spells, and class options, DM and player should work together to decide how to add this new material into the campaign. A DM may choose to make all of these options available to all characters, with no need for special training. Alternatively, a DM may wish to restrict new material to certain cultures or organizations, requiring a character to seek out a mentor of that culture to take advantage of the option.

New Character Classes

Player's Handbook II presents four new classes for player characters: the cunning beguiler, the stoic dragon shaman, the deadly duskblade, and the bold knight. While a character of any race or background can choose one of these paths, each class is well suited to certain cultures and nations; here are a few suggestions to help place these classes in the world. Bear in mind that characters with PC classes are always remarkable; while the beguiler is an excellent match for the Royal Eyes of Aundair, the majority of the Royal Eyes will be mundane experts or expert/beguilers. A high-level beguiler is an exceptional agent and a worthy adversary for the PCs.

The Beguiler

The beguiler specializes in stealth and deception, merging mundane skill with a versatile selection of spells. A beguiler makes an exceptional spy; in addition to her talent for illusion and enchantment, spells such as *detect thoughts, clairaudience/ clairvoyance,* and *sending* allow her to pluck information from enemy strongholds and relay it back to her superiors. In a world where magic has long been part of civilization, a few organizations are especially likely to produce beguilers. A player character could begin as an agent of one of these forces; alternatively, one of these groups may recognize her talents and seek to recruit her over the course of a campaign.

Among the common races, one of the oldest beguiler traditions is that of House Phiarlan -- a tradition now shared with House Thuranni. The Phiarlans were spies long before the Mark of Shadows appeared, and some of the practices of the Phiarlan beguilers date back to the fall of Xen'drik.

Given their natural gift for illusions and love of intrigue, it should come as no surprise that the gnomes of Zilargo make excellent beguilers. While many Zil gnomes prefer the path of the bard, the talents of the beguiler are better suited for pure espionage; as a result, many of the top corliganos ("roving ears") of the Trust are beguilers.

Within the Five Nations, Aundair has the longest tradition of arcane magic, and the Royal Eyes of Aundair has been building an elite corps of beguilers. While beguilers exist in other nations, the spies of Breland and Karrnath typically prefer the raw skill and deadly sneak attack of the rogue to the arcane tricks of the beguiler.

Not all beguilers are spies, and not all develop their gifts as a result of training. In Droaam and the Shadow Marches, a few children spontaneously manifest beguiler talents; traditionally, these gifts are seen as the touch of the Dark Six, and these youths are often claimed by priests and raised to revere the Six. These natural beguilers are known as *sheelidar* -- "six-fingered hands" -- and a few actually do have an extra digit on hands and feet. While they are taught to use their powers in the service of the Dark Six, sheelidar are not always evil; many simply believe that the Six are wild and primal forces, and that the civilized followers of the Sovereign Host are afraid of the passion and energy of the Six.

Finally, a few races in the **Eberron** setting often produce beguilers. Doppelgangers and changelings are foremost among these, and at the DM's discretion, a player with a changeling PC can take beguiler as his favored class instead of rogue. The other force known for its beguilers are the rakshasa. As the rakshasa are known as spirits of deception, a DM may chose to give a rakshasa the spellcasting abilities of a beguiler instead of a sorcerer -- although to gain any of the other class abilities of a beguiler, the rakshasa will need to take levels in the class.

The Dragon Shaman

Though rarely seen, dragons are known across Eberron as symbols of magic and power. The dragon shaman exists in many different cultures. Some worship the first children of Eberron and Siberys, while others simply seek the power of these mighty creatures. A few of these forces are described below.

The barbarians of the Seren Islands produce a remarkable number of dragon shamans. Each of the Seren tribes reveres a draconic founder, and those shamans who can draw on the strength of the founder are considered truly blessed. Many of the most gifted dragon shamans follow a call into the heart of Aerenal itself; some say that these heroes serve in the kingdom of wyrms, while others believe that they are sent out into the wider world to do the bidding of their dragon masters.

Many know the legend of the Storm Guardians, the clan of blue dragons who are said to live atop the highest peak in Adar and to protect the land from its enemies. But another tale that few beyond Adar have heard

sometimes gets passed along in whispers among those of Adar. A hidden valley high on Korrandar is home to an order of monks chosen long ago by the first Guardians. According to the tale, these monks study the ways of the dragon until they become dragons themselves; if the legend is true, some of the dragons soaring above the clouds of Adar are dragon shamans who have undergone a remarkable apotheosis. A few bold adventures have gone in search of this Valley of Dragons; to date, none have returned.

There are many different interpretations of the Sovereign Host. One cult asserts that the Sovereigns are in fact dragons, children of the first age who ascended to a state beyond mortal understanding. Priests of this sect may become dragon shamans instead of clerics or adepts, assuming the traits of their divine patron. For example, a shaman dedicated to Aureon would take the blue dragon as his patron. The dragons associated with the Sovereigns can be found on pages 68-69 of the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting*. At the moment this is an obscure sect, but recently the cult has been gaining support in Stormreach.

In the Shadow Marches, tales speak of the duraak'al, warriors with the strength of the black dragon. Such orcs are said to carry the blessing of the dragon Vvaraak, the wyrm who prepared the orcs for the war against Xoriat. Today the duraak'al are a thing of legend . . . but it's always possible those legends will rise again!

Dragon shamans are also found among the kobolds, where they vie with sorcerers for positions of spiritual leadership. Finally, tales from Q'barra suggest that dragon shamans exist among the lizardfolk of that distant tribe -- priests who revere the dragon Rhashaak as a living god.

While it may seem that dragon shamans who adopt the physical traits of their totems will stand out in Khorvaire, there are many strange things in the world. In a land where shifters and changelings are part of daily life, and ogres, gargoyles, and even medusas live or travel within major cities, a human with faint scales isn't terribly noteworthy. A dragon shaman can stand out in a crowd, but she is unlikely to suffer any sort of prejudice due to her appearance.

According to the *Player's Handbook II*, the alignment of a dragon shaman must be within one step of the dragon he emulates. However, in Eberron, the alignment of a dragon is not fixed by its color -- nor are worshipers traditionally bound by the alignment of their deities. As such, a DM may wish to remove the alignment restriction. With that said, dragon shamans should typically follow the *perceived* alignment of their draconic patrons. For example, although blue dragons can be any alignment, the Storm Guardians of Adar are seen as noble beings -- so a dragon shaman who emulates these blue wyrms will usually be good.

The Duskblade

The duskblade combines magic with the art of war. The *Player's Handbook II* describes the duskblade as an elf tradition, and this certainly fits in Eberron. Some of the greatest heroes of the ancient elf-giant conflict were duskblades, and today these arcane warriors work both among the champions of Aerenal and the Tairnadal elves of Valenar, where they ride side by side with rangers and true wizards.

However, the elves aren't the only culture to produce duskblades. A recent Morgrave expedition has produced evidence suggesting that the giants had duskblades of their own. Before the Inspired conquest of Sarlona, duskblades existed in the human kingdom of Ohr Kaluun; this tradition may have survived among the refugees of this fallen land, either in the depths of the Lhazaar Principalities, the monasteries of Adar, or the crumbling war mazes of Ohr Kaluun itself.

Finally, the duskblade is ideally suited to the martial sensibilities of Aundair, which combines a deep respect for magic with a love for flair and color in battle. While Aundair has yet to produce a duskblade who can match the masters of Aerenal and Valenar, a player character could prove to be the exception to this rule!

The Knight

In the golden age of Galifar, noble knights existed across Khorvaire. In the wake of the Last War, knights still live in any land, but the flower of chivalry blooms in two nations that remain bitter rivals -- Thrane and Karrnath. Both nations have always held discipline and martial excellence in high regard, and both favor styles of combat well suited to the knight; Thrane's heavy cavalry is unequalled in the land, while the armored infantry of Karrnath is rightfully feared by all. By contrast, while one can find knights in the other five nations, Aundair's love of magic often distracts from the pure martial discipline of the knight, while the pragmatic Brelish often let honor slide for the sake of expediency. Only a handful of Cyran knights survived the Mourning, but these proud soldiers are often remarkable individuals; having lost their land, all they have left is their honor, and they will not lose that too.

While great tension exists between the common people of Thrane and Karrnath, the knights of these two lands often hold one another in high regard; they may be enemies, but at least they are worthy opponents. Recently, King Kaius III has been working with Flamekeep to arrange a series of grand melees, in the hopes of strengthening this bond and furthering the cause of peace.

Beyond the Five Nations, a few of the dwarves of Clan Mroranon adopted the traditions of the knight for Karrnath during the Last War; in the wake of the Mror secession, a bitter rivalry often flares up between dwarf and Karrnathi knights. A few knights are among the Valenar, but less than one might expect to find in that martial culture. In their war against the giants, the elves of old found themselves relying on commando tactics; thus more elves follow the path of the ranger or scout.

Expanded Classes and New Feats

Player's Handbook II presents new options for every class, along with a host of new feats. At the DM's discretion, these options could be available to all characters; any barbarian could choose berserk strength in place of rage, regardless of the traditions of his tribe. But certain cultures and organizations may be especially prone to their use; a few examples are given below.

Arcane Thesis. In Khorvaire, Arcane Thesis is typically seen among the wizards of the Arcane Congress; the long magical traditions of Aundair help those who choose to focus on a specific field of study. Beyond Khorvaire, the elves of Aerenal are also fond of Arcane Thesis, reflecting their obsession with perfecting specific skills.

The Blood of Vol. The followers of the Blood of Vol place a tremendous importance on the spiritual power of blood. As such, priests of the Blood of Vol should be eligible to take the Ritual Blood Bond feat, regardless of race. This bond of blood also can be reflected with the Divine Ward feat, allowing priests of the blood to aid their followers from a distance. Finally, many clerics of the Blood of Vol use the spontaneous domain casting option (page 37), usually focusing on the Necromancer domain.

The Church of the Silver Flame. As a religion of light, Sacred Purification and Sacred Radiance are especially appropriate for clerics of the Silver Flame. While many of the priests of Thrane are often experts instead of adepts or clerics, several do possess the Ritual Blessing feat, which allows them to aid their followers.

House Ghallanda. While the House of Hospitality is often seen as a harmless force, heirs of the house are often exceptionally skilled at the arts of conversation. Both Master Manipulator and Wanderer's Diplomacy are often used by Ghallanda characters.

House Vadalis. The House of Handling is interested in all forms of interaction between magic and the animal world. While many war-wizards of the Five Nations prefer Immediate Magic (page 68), wizards of House Vadalis invariably possess familiars, and the house is an excellent place to learn the familiar-enhancing feats presented in *Player's Handbook II.*

Infernal and Celestial Sorcerers. While there is limited traffic between Eberron and the Outer Planes, there are many ways to use these feats. A sorcerer born in a manifest zone may develop heritage feats in spite of there being no blood connection to an outsider. A celestial sorcerer may channel the power of the Silver Flame, being a living link to this divine force. Likewise, it's possible that the sorcerer actually has been touched by the pure power of Khyber or Siberys, becoming a vessel for the light or darkness of the world itself. An infernal sorcerer will have an easy time finding a place within the Cults of the Dragon Below or working with the Lords of Dust; a celestial sorcerer might work with a church or the Chamber, or find her own path.

The Mironite Monks. Almost unknown outside of Thrane, the Mironite monks are a sect of martial ascetics who have learned to channel the power of the Silver Flame through their own flesh and spirit. On Khorvaire, the Mironites are the primary users of the Fiery Fist, Fiery *Ki* Defense, and *Ki* Blast feats.

The Sovereign Host. Since priests of the Sovereign Host can turn to many deities for inspiration, they can use almost any of the new feats presented in *Player's Handbook II*. A paladin of Dol Arrah may use Divine Justice or Sacred Radiance, while a cleric sworn to Dol Dorn is more likely to draw on Divine Armor. Clerics who are particularly dedicated to a specific Sovereign typically use the Spontaneous Domain Casting option; a cleric of Onatar has little talent for healing.

War Magic of Karrnath. Recognizing the power of Aundair, the wizards of Karrnath have fought to ramp up their own war magic over the last few decades. While Karrnathi wizards often lack the finesse and scholarly nature of their Aundairian counterparts, they are grim and determined. Arcane Toughness and Arcane Consumption are both techniques employed by the Karrns, along with the new metamagic feats presented in the *Player's Handbook II*. The majority of Karrnathi wizards use the Immediate Magic class option; in times of war, a familiar often gets in the way.

Weapon Supremacy. No known hero possesses this level of skill, and a PC who attains this level of mastery should be celebrated far and wide for her remarkable talent. The last known supreme swordmaster within the Five Nations was Drago ir'Loran of Karrnath, who personally trained the young King Jarot before the Last War.

Of course, it's possible that beings out there may have this level of skill but have chosen to conceal it; there may be a zakya lord on the Council of Ashtakala who is waiting for the day when a mortal will learn the skills to actually prove a challenge with a blade.

The Zil. The gnomes of Zilargo are renowned for their love of intrigue and skill with alchemy. Master Manipulator and Wanderer's Diplomacy are both highly appropriate for Zil characters. In addition, Zilargo is a very logical place to find the Grenadier and Mad Alchemist feats. Zil bards love to weave magic and illusion into their performances, and the Arcane Flourish feat is a good way to represent this.

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the World of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War* for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., he has produced material for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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Complete Psionic

By Keith Baker

Welcome back to Eberron Expanded. This series of articles examines sourcebooks that have not been specifically designed for the **Eberron** Campaign Setting*. Bear in mind that the ideas presented in these articles are* suggestions*. As a DM, you always have the final word as to what you add to your game and how you want it to fit into the world.*

The *Complete Psionic* sourcebookpresents a host of new options for players and DMs: feats, equipment, races, monsters, and both basic and prestige classes. Let's examine ways to incorporate these elements into the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting*. For additional information about the role of psionics in the world, refer to the *Psionics in Eberron* Dragonshard article.

The Exiles of Talaron

Complete Psionic introduces two forces -- the Hidden Houses and the guild of the Diamond Knights -- that trace their history back to the fallen world of Talaron. A DM who wishes to uses these organizations in the game has to decide the nature of Talaron. The ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting* says that the daelkyr of Xoriat consider the destruction of worlds to be a form of art . . . a statement that implies that they have destroyed worlds in the past. Thus, one possibility is that the exiles of Talaron are the last survivors of a world shattered by the Realm of Madness. Following this path, the Diamond Knights would be the mortal foes of the Cults of the Dragon Below and natural allies of the Gatekeepers.

Another possibility is that Talaron was a city, not a world -- a vast metropolis in the Sarlonan kingdom of Rhiavhaar. The noble houses of Talaron were known for their psychic powers and vivid dreams. For ages these psionic abilities helped them maintain their influence in society, but when the Dreaming Dark turned its eyes to Sarlona, those same powers were turned against the houses. Many heirs proved to be particularly vulnerable to quori manipulation, and these formed the first rank of quori agents in Eberron: the force that would one day become the Inspired. Those who could resist the Dreaming Dark were hunted down by their corrupted brethren and fled to Khorvaire amid the other refugees. This is why the houses hide; they still fear the persecution of the Dreaming Dark and their corrupted brethren. Today, they fight their own secret war against the Dreaming Dark and Dal Quor. Occasionally, the Diamond Knights ally with kalashtar atavists, but many of the children of Talaron distrust anything touched by Dal Quor; in the minds of these zealots, the kalashtar are

majority of divine minds hail from Sarlona. Among the priests of the Path of Light, divine minds are considerably more common than clerics or adepts. On the other side of the coin, the Inspired worship the Dreaming Dark itself; this provides them with access to the Evil, Law, Light and Darkness, and Corruption and Madness mantles. The Corruption and Madness mantle represents the terrors held within the Dreaming Dark, and the manifestations of its powers should reflect this bond to nightmares.

The **lurk** is a scoundrel who uses psionic power to enhance her gifts of stealth and deception. The Dreaming Dark is a common source for lurks, both actual Inspired agents and humans trained in Khorvaire to serve the ends of il-Lashtavar. However, there is another strong lurk tradition. Doppelgangers are naturally telepathic, and the secret society known as the Cabinet of Faces often trains both doppelgangers and changelings in the lurking arts. The lurks of the Dreaming Dark often learn combat-oriented powers, to better serve as assassins. The traditions of the Cabinet of Faces emphasize stealth and evasion, aimed to serve the spy as opposed to the killer.

While a few kalashtar follow the path of the lurk, most prefer the contemplative paths of the psion or divine mind. Rumors of a radical group of kalashtar lurk-soulknives known as the Blades of Taratai have been floating around, and some say the members of this group engage in aggressive acts against the Inspired deep in the heart of Riedra. If this group exists, it is well hidden. The elders of Adar maintain that most Riedrans and even empty vessels are innocent victims of the Dreaming Dark; as such, they disapprove of many of the actions attributed to the Blades.

Prestige Classes

Complete Psionic presents eight psionic prestige classes; here are possible hooks for each of them.

Anarchic Initiate. While many believe that psionic power flows from Dal Quor and Xoriat, the anarchic initiate draws her wild energy from the plane of Kythri, the Churning Chaos. All effects that refer to Limbo should be altered to Kythri. Changelings are often drawn to this path, and anarchic initiates occasionally work with the Cabinet of Faces, though most initiates are too chaotic to align with any one organization for long, even one aligned with the Traveler.

Ebon Saint. The Cabinet of Faces claims that the Traveler taught doppelgangers the arts of the ebon saint before humanity even came to Khorvaire. Ebon saints are widely respected among doppelgangers, regardless of race. The motivations of the Cabinet of Faces remain a mystery. Sometimes a saint of the Traveler sells his services, but often he simply shows up with a piece of invaluable information and vanishes again, with no explanation. Of course, one should always beware the gifts of the Traveler; the "help" of an ebon saint may have unforeseen consequences.

An adventurer who wishes to become an ebon saint must first find an instructor, and this can be a considerable challenge. A doppelganger saint is more likely to mentor a changeling than a member of any of the other common races, but

just as bad as the Inspired, and the hidden houses have struck against the kalashtar in the past.

Regardless of which path the DM chooses to take, the inland Lhazaar Principalities are an excellent place to put the Hidden Houses, the Diamond Knights, and the other exiles of Talaron. The Lhazaar Principalities are best known for sailors and pirates, but there are inland principalities between the Lhazaar Sea and the Ironroot Mountains, and these regions are often overlooked by the people of the Five Nations. Every principality has its own traditions and customs, some dating back to Old Sarlona. This is an easy place for the Hidden Houses of Talaron to hide from prying eyes. It's quite possible that each house has a principality to call its own, although the prince and his people would conceal their powers from travelers.

Illithid Heritage

In the ***Eberron*** *Campaign Setting,* mind flayers are emissaries of Xoriat, the Realm of Madness. However, their origins remain a mystery. Are they the spawn of Xoriat itself? Or are they the twisted survivors of another world?

Regardless of the answer, the illithids are iconic symbols of Xoriat and the Cults of the Dragon Below. The illithid heritage feats presented in *Complete Psionic* could be caused by many things besides actual illithid ancestry:

- An ancient blade forged by Dyrrn the Corruptor taints all who come into contact with it. Anyone who carries the blade suffers a slow transformation. Over the course of weeks, the character's feats are replaced by illithid heritage feats. When he acquires four such feats, he becomes a true illithid in mind and body, turning on his former allies. This corruption can be reversed if the wielder can be separated from the blade, but the immense ego of the artifact prevents a weak-willed host from relinquishing this treasure.
- A manifest zone linked to Xoriat corrupts all who linger in its confines for an extended period of time. A century ago, a village was built within the zone; now illithid heritage feats can be found throughout the population of the village, although the people here typically hide these "blessings" from outsiders. What happens when adventurers stumble into this haven of the Cults of the Dragon Below? What if one of the adventurers was born in this village and is only now discovering the taint within her bloodline?
- Darguul legends speak of the Kech Uul. Reports said that this Dhakaani clan was completely eradicated in battle with the daelkyr. But some say that the Kech Uul were not destroyed -- rather, they were infected by the horrors that they fought and chose to go into hiding instead of revealing their shame. If the Kech Uul still exist, do these illithid-touched goblinoids fight the forces of Xoriat? Or have they fallen prey to the power of madness and turned against their kin?
- Any cleric, adept, or favored soul dedicated to the Cults of the Dragon Below could easily develop illithid heritage feats -- a terrible sign of the power of his faith.

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At the DM's discretion, when a character that already possesses the ability to change shape at will (such as a doppelganger, changeling, or rakshasa) uses the *steal form* ability of the ebon saint, he should receive a +5 insight bonus on his Disguise check.

Ectopic Adept. The Quori are shapers of dreams, and the skills of the ectopic adept make dreams into deadly reality. For the kalashtar of Adar, long outnumbered by their Riedran foes, the arts of the shaper are a vital tool in the defense of the nation. Both Adarans and Inspired have orders of ectopic adepts; the finest school in Eberron is known as the Pillar of Tanalash, located in the Adaran fortress of Malshashar.

Flayerspawn Psychics. Any of the options explored in the Illithid Heritage section above could apply to flayerspawn psychics.

Illumine Souls. Tales of the war between the Undying Court and the Line of Vol mention three champions who wielded the pure light of Irian, "smiting the enemy with sunlight blades." While other psionic classes are rare in Aerenal, the Deathguard maintains an elite cadre of soulknives known as the Iria Tairn, or the " warriors of light." Few in number, these illumine souls are held in reserve for the most terrible dangers. Any elf or half-elf soulknife sworn to the Undying Court could seek to join this order. To date, no member of any other race has been inducted into the Iria Tairn, but a hero who proves the purity of his intentions might win the trust of the Deathguard.

Soulbows. The soulbow tradition has its roots among the dromites of Sarlona, and Riedrans have frequently faced dromite mind-archers in the intermittent wars between the two nations. The technique has been adopted by both the Inspired and the people of Adar, and the Reclaimers easily could be found on the fringes of Riedra.

Storm Disciples. Adar is a land of strange and violent weather, of storms that often seem to protect the realm from those who mean it harm. Legends attribute this to the power of the Storm Guardians, a clan of blue dragons who dwell on the peak of Korrandar. The storm disciples are a monastic order founded long before the coming of the kalashtar, and they consider themselves to be the true guardians of Adar. While they may fight side by side against the Riedrans, there has been tension between the storm disciples and the kalashtar; the disciples believe that the current woes of Adar can be laid at the feet of the kalashtar, and some say that the refuge of Adar was never meant for the spirits of another world.

In addition to the disciples of Adar, there are rumors that an enclave of House Lyrandar is exploring new ways to manipulate the power of the storm. Is this a natural gift? Or is this knowledge offered by agents of the Dreaming Dark, a lure to corrupt young heirs of the house into serving the quori agenda?

Zerth Cenobites. The most common practitioners of zerthin on Eberron are the dolgaunt monks of Khyber. Though blind, these dolgaunt mystics can see through time and slip through the seconds to catch foes unawares. Some say that these techniques were stolen from another world destroyed by the daelkyr; an obscure dolgaunt legend says that the first Zerthin masters threw themselves forward in time to escape death, and warns that this githzerai army could reemerge at any moment to seek vengeance for their shattered world.

About the Author

Synads and Host Feats

The synad race has much in common with the kalashtar of Eberron. Both trace their roots to another plane of existence -- in both cases a realm full of horrors. And both races are defined by their expanded minds; the threefold mind in the case of the synad, and the quori-human union of the kalashtar.

Because there is such overlap between the two races, a DM may wish to focus on just one of these races. If a DM likes the kalashtar storyline but prefers the racial traits of the synad, one option is to simply change the names by using synad traits for the kalashtar. Say that the oracle aspect of the synad's threefold mind is actually the influence of the quori spirit. Another option is to say that synads and kalashtar are actually offshoots with the same point of origin -- that synads are bound to a previously unknown class of quori spirit that has a different relationship with its hosts. Both of these have the advantage of letting the synad draw on the existing story built around the kalashtar, including a homeland in Adar and the ongoing struggle with the Dreaming Dark.

A completely different approach is to make the synads an entirely artificial race. House Vadalis is best known for its magebred animals. But long-lived rumors say that Vadalis magebreeders have been experimenting on humans. The synads could be the result of House Vadalis attempting to create its own kalashtar. A DM who follows this path needs to decide how many synads exist in the world, and whether they are loyal to their creators. Is there a growing corps of synads hidden within House Vadalis? Or are there only a handful of synads: fugitives fleeing from a house that wants to erase all evidence of the breeding program?

In either case, the host feats presented in *Complete Psionic* are suitable for both Inspired and kalashtar. However, in the case of the Inspired, the empty vessel cannot take advantage of these feats while its quori spirit is absent.

New Classes: Ardent, Divine Mind, and Lurk

Complete Psionic presents three new psionic classes. While a character of any race or culture could pursue one of these paths, each class is best suited to a particular aspect of Eberron.

While the kalashtar brought considerable knowledge of the psionic arts with them when they first arrived on Eberron, some humans had studied the powers of the mind long before this time. The path of the **ardent** has a long history in Adar, one that stands apart from the Path of Light. Both kalashtar and Inspired may become ardents, but the greatest students of the ardent philosophies are humans. If the DM chooses to trace the history of the Six Hidden Houses back to pre-Riedran Sarlona, the ardent could have a strong place within this hidden psionic culture.

Many roles await the **divine mind** in Eberron. *Complete Psionic* provides mantle lists for all of the major religions of Eberron. Divine minds are rarely seen within the churches of the Five Nations, but faith can always bring out latent talent. The Cult of the Dragon Below has produced a number of divine minds, fearsome warriors armored in the essence of madness, but the

the only predictable thing about the Cabinet of Faces is that it is unpredictable.

At the DM's discretion, when a character that already possesses the ability to change shape at will (such as a doppelganger, changeling, or rakshasa) uses the *steal form* ability of the ebon saint, he should receive a +5 insight bonus on his Disguise check.

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